



News for Immediate Release

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Governor's Leadership Secures Permits for DWR Critical Levee Site Repair
Schwarzenegger helps to expedite process, protect environmental concerns

Sacramento - The Department of Water Resources (DWR) today announced it has all necessary environmental permits and regulatory approvals to repair 29 critical levee erosion sites. Ordinarily, federal permits and approvals require a year or more to obtain. However, Governor Schwarzenegger was able to secure the necessary commitments from federal agencies to get the permits and approvals in a matter of weeks, while ensuring that environmental safeguards are followed.

"Thanks to Governor Schwarzenegger's active involvement, we now have all of the federal and state permits and approvals that are needed to go forward with emergency repairs," said DWR Director Lester Snow. "The federal and state agencies have shown an unprecedented level of cooperation and coordination on this important project."

Construction on most of the sites, part of the Sacramento River flood control system, will begin in July. DWR is responsible for repairing erosion at 19 levee sites and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will repair erosion on 10 levee sites.

These permits and approvals allow DWR and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to commence construction while ensuring that the levee repairs are completed with minimal environmental impact.

Since May 1, DWR and the U.S. Army Corps have obtained more than 50 permits and approvals from state and federal agencies. The permits are needed before repair work can begin on the levees. The State Lands Commission yesterday voted to approve a general lease for the construction to proceed with work on sites where sovereign lands are affected.

"We have pledged that the repairs to these critically eroded sites will be done by November of this year," said Snow. "This final approval allows us to get started on schedule so we can better protect Californians from flooding starting next winter."

In February, Governor Schwarzenegger declared a State of Emergency for California's levee

system and ordered DWR develop a plan to begin immediate repairs to prevent catastrophic flooding and loss of life.

The emergency declaration expedited the state agency permitting and approval process and authorized emergency contracting procedures. Federal permits and approvals are also required under the federal Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act and other federal laws.

For more information on the 29 critical erosion sites, visit DWR's emergency levee repair Web site at www.levees.water.ca.gov.

The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.

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